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College Avenue Bridge
Project I.D. 4984-01-12

Traffic projections for the College Avenue Bridge have caused some confusion as this project progresses. This letter will update the figures listed in Appendix A of the College Avenue Bridge Report and address some additional questions that I have recently received.

The traffic projection for the College Avenue Bridge predicts a volume of 23,900 vehicles per day in 2010, 28,500 vehicles per day in 2020, and 33,000 vehicles per day in 2030. These volumes are calculated using the Fox Cities travel demand model, a state of the art tool for predicting traffic volumes in an urban area. These numbers were reviewed and reaffirmed in November 2003.

The base volumes for these projections are the WisDOT 1994 and 1997 three-year coverage counts. The projected volumes are predictions of estimated vehicle trips based on input for projected population, dwelling units, automobiles, school enrollment, and employment locations derived from the Long Range Transportation /Land Use Plan for the Fox Cities Urbanized Areas. Recent traffic count data recorded by the city of Appleton in 2002 and 2003 was not used in the travel demand model traffic projections, but do show that the projections are realistic.

Some confusion resulted from a preliminary projection made by the WisDOT traffic-forecasting unit in 2001. That projection predicted a volume of 24,700 vehicles per day for the bridge in 2028. The methodology in arriving at this projected volume used the WisDOT 2000 three-year coverage count on College Avenue and expanded it at a growth of one percent per year. This preliminary projection is not being used because the accuracy of the Fox Cities traffic demand model is significantly greater.

I wish to use this letter to update the traffic volume statement from Appendix A of the College Avenue Bridge Report. That appendix identified the 24,700 vehicles per day projection that was developed using the one percent growth rate as a two-lane projection, and the Fox Cities traffic demand model projection as a four-lane projection. They are, in reality, separate projections

using different methods and have no bearing on the number of lanes for the bridge. The traffic forecast for the bridge should be based on the model results, thus providing projections from the most reliable method available. The projected volumes of 23,700 vehicles per day in 2010, 28,500 vehicles per day in 2020, and 33,000 vehicles per day in 2030, based on the model, are considered to be accurate and reliable projections for the College Avenue Bridge, and are valid regardless of the number of travel lanes.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this information further, please contact Tom Kobus at (920) 492-0143 or myself at (920) 492-5662 to further discuss.

Jim Lamers, P.E.
Project Development Supervisor

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Cc: Timothy Hanna, City of Appleton Mayor
Earl Brooker, Alderperson/Chair Municipal Services Committee
Senator Michael Ellis
Representative Steve Wieckert